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Putin Says He's Open to Discussing Trump's Peace Plan But Warns Ukraine Faces Defeat

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Vladimir Putin. **kremlin.ru**

President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that he may be open to some elements of a new U.S. plan to end the war in Ukraine, but issued a defiant warning that Russian forces would continue their advance in the Donbas region if Kyiv refuses to accept his conditions for a ceasefire.

"Ukrainian forces will have to leave the territories they currently occupy, and then the fighting will stop. If they don't, we will achieve this by military means," Putin told reporters during a press conference in Kyrgyzstan.

He claimed that Russian troops are advancing on "all fronts" and that Ukrainian losses now outpace Kyiv's ability to replenish its armed forces.

Putin also repeated his longstanding view that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is no

longer a legitimate leader, arguing that Ukraine's postponement of its presidential election under martial law makes it "legally impossible" to sign an agreement with him.

"We want to sign an agreement with Ukraine, but that is practically impossible, legally impossible," he said. "We need the decision to be recognized at the international level."

His comments come amid a renewed burst of diplomacy triggered by last week's leak of a 28-point peace plan drafted by the Trump administration and, reportedly, Kremlin officials. The plan has since been pared down to roughly 20 points, and U.S. officials have hinted that Ukraine agreed to the revised version.

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It remains unclear whether Putin will back the changes, which sources say are "significantly better" for Ukraine than the original framework, widely seen as closer to Russia's position.

The Kremlin has said the initial draft included "many provisions" it found acceptable, but emphasized that it still requires "reworking."

Putin echoed that stance at the press conference on Thursday as he denied that Russian officials played an active role in crafting the original U.S. document following his summit with President Donald Trump in Alaska in August.

"There was no draft agreement. There was a set of issues proposed for discussion," he said, adding that Kremlin officials only received and reviewed the U.S. proposal after it was leaked to the press.

While Putin did not say whether he supports all the provisions, he said "in general we agree that it can serve as the basis for future agreements," suggesting some elements align with Moscow's negotiating position.

Still, the president criticized parts of the framework as lacking a serious legal tone, citing one clause that would require Russia to codify a policy of non-aggression toward Europe and Ukraine.

"It's one thing to say in general terms that Russia is not planning to attack Europe. To us, that sounds ridiculous, as we never planned to," he said. "But if they want to hear it from us, fine, we can put that down in writing. No problem."

Putin also lashed out at European leaders who have warned of potential future Russian aggression. Some of those officials, he said, are "not quite right in the head."

Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff is scheduled to travel with a delegation to Moscow next week to meet with Putin and discuss the revised peace proposal that U.S. and Ukrainian officials developed over the weekend in Geneva, Switzerland.

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